

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW ROMANIAN PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS

1. WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED FROM MFA COPY OF NEW ROMANIAN PROTOCOL BOOKLET (COPY BEING POUCHED EUR/EE) WHICH INCLUDES CHAPTER ON "RULES OF PROTOCOL WHICH MUST BE OBSERVED BY CHIEFS OF MISSION," A SECTION WHICH HAD NOT APPEARED IN THE 1968 EDITION. AMONG THE RULES IS ONE WHICH STATES THAT CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS SALUTE, BY RISING TO THEIR FEET, IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS: THE PLAYING OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM, THE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC AND WHEN THE AUDIENCE AND PARTICIPANTS ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS SALUTE THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC BY RISING TO THEIR FEET."

2. BACKGROUND TO THIS PARTICULAR PROVISION IN QUOTES IS AS FOLLOWS:

AT THE TIME OF THE ROMANIAN PARTY CONGRESS LAST NOVEMBER, A NUMBER OF AMBASSADORS, INCLUDING MYSELF, DID NOT RISE TO OUR FEET WHENEVER THE DELEGATES AT THE CONGRESS ROSE TO CHEER PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU AND SHOUT VARIOUS PARTY SLOGANS. SIMILARLY, EARLY LAST YEAR PRIOR TO MY ARRIVAL I GATHER A NUMBER OF AMBASSADORS DID NOT RISE TO THEIR FEET DURING THE COURSE OF A GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION WHEN THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY JUMPED TO THEIRS PERIODICALLY TO SALUTE PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU FOR ONE REMARK OR ANOTHER OF HIS OR OF SOME SPEAKER ADDRESSED TO HIM. THERE WAS AGREEMENT

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LATE LAST YEAR AMONG NATO AMBASSADORS THAT TO ACT LIKE

ROMANIAN MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE WOULD IN EFFECT TURN US INTO ROMANIAN PARTICIPANTS. IN ADDITION, WE FELT WE COULD NOT BE IN A SITUATION OF BEING EXPECTED TO RISE TO OUR FEET FOR SUCH ROMANIAN PARTY OR GOVERNMENT SLOGANS AS MIGHT CONDEMN, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, ACTIVITIES OF OUR OWN GOVERNMENTS. THIS POINT OF VIEW WAS CONVEYED MOST DIRECTLY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY BY THE GERMAN AND BRITISH AMBASSADORS, ON THE BASIS OF INSTRUCTIONS, AFTER THEY HAD BEEN CALLED IN BY A DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER WHO COMPLAINED TO THEM AFTER THE CONGRESS.

3. NATO CHIEFS OF MISSION MET MARCH 10 TO REVIEW THE SITUATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEWLY PUBLISHED PROTOCOL RULES. OUR UNANIMOUS CONCLUSION WAS TO RECOMMEND TO OUR CAPITALS THAT WE FOLLOW THE SAME APPROACH AS WE DID IN THE FORMULA AGREED UPON EARLIER, NAMELY THAT WE WOULD SHOW THE PROPER RESPECT TO THE PRESIDENT BY STANDING WHEN HE ENTERS AND LEAVES AND BY RISING TO OUR FEET WHEN HE RISES TO HIS BUT WE WOULD NOT ACT LIKE PARTICIPANTS ON SUCH OCCASIONS BY AUTOMATICALLY RISING TO OUR FEET WHEN ROMANIAN PARTICIPANTS DO SO. IT WAS AGREED THAT WE WOULD SEEK CONFIRMATION FROM OUR CAPITALS OF THIS APPROACH. IN THE MEANTIME, WE ARE SPEAKING TO OTHER AMBASSADORS AS WELL AS TO THE DEAN. WE CALCULATE THAT THE WORST THAT COULD HAPPEN WOULD BE THAT WE WOULD NOT BE INVITED TO THE SORT OF SESSIONS WHERE THERE IS APT TO BE MUCH GETTING UP AND DOWN. OUR CONSENSUS IS THAT THE NEW RULES ARE PART OF THE PERSONALITY CULT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST WASHINGTON COMMENTS ON THE JOINT NATO APPROACH AT LEAST IN TIME FOR NEXT NATO MEETING MARCH 17. WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE RESPONSE SOONER HOWEVER BECAUSE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION MAY OCCUR BEFORE THEN.
BARNES

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